

Friends of Delaware Libraries Board Meeting Minutes – Approved 4/13/2026

March 16, 2026 (via Zoom)

Meeting overview

Present: *Tiffany Lydon, Vivian Erickson, Marlene Biddinger, Kay Bowes, Mary Chute, Skip Dye, Sue Gooden, Jacqueline Krech, Theo Loppatto*

The March 16, 2026 FODL Board meeting focused on:

- Planning for upcoming Sussex County meeting on April 27th at Georgetown Library. The group discussed logistics for the event, including lunch arrangements, registration through Georgetown's LibCal system, and promotional activities on social media.
- They explored ideas for themed donation baskets for the upcoming DLA conference, considering options such as wine-themed baskets or mocktail kits.
- The board also reviewed budget matters, including potential fee increases for memberships proposed to take effect July 1st.
- There was discussion of a fundraising opportunity through *EveryLibrary* that would allow for online donations. Detailed information about the program was provided, explaining how it would work as well as the benefits and costs of implementing it.
- The conversation ended with discussions about promoting the April 27th event through Facebook and other channels. This included discussion of challenges with accessing and managing the current Facebook page.

Summary

Approval of Minutes of February 9, 2026 meeting.

Minutes had been sent out by the Secretary (Mary Chute) for review by the Board. Motion for approval was made by Theo Loppatto and seconded by Kay Bowes.

Financial Updates and Budget Planning

The Treasurer (Sue Gooden) reported the current balance and payment of state taxes of \$44. The group discussed budgeting for food at county meetings. We will research pricing at local stores and gather input from the group on budget figures.

Donation and Funding Strategy Discussion

A question was raised regarding how we will track any donations and other potential funding sources beyond membership dues for future planning purposes.

It was suggested that we check with local stores like Redner's and Giant for wholesale pricing on food items for non-profit organizations for events such as our periodic county meetings.

The possibility of establishing a registration table donation box at meetings was mentioned.

Donation Baskets and Membership Plans

The group discussed plans for donation baskets for the DLA conference (May 6-8). Several themes were suggested. The first suggestion was a wine-themed basket from a local winery. A 'mocktail' themed basket (including mocktail recipe books) was suggested as one alternative. Additionally, they discussed going back to last year's donor – but decided to consider returning to that next year or perhaps for a raffle basket at the FODL Annual Meeting. It was decided to wait for a response about the winery donation before finalizing the basket's theme.

The group discussed FODL 'vendor representation'/paying for a representative to attend the DLA conference. They decided against funding a vendor table this year and will instead plan to visit Delaware libraries directly to introduce our organization. The group decided not to invest in registering for a full DLA conference slot and instead discussed sending one member for one day. As it happens one board member will already be in attendance for the full conference and another is attending Friday. These scheduled attendees should cover FODL presence this year.

July 1st was confirmed by the group as the tentative date for the dues increase. Prior to the rate increase, there will be efforts to "promote" current membership renewals.

There was a brief discussion of professional development opportunities, including potential ALA membership and a Delaware League of Women Voters membership.

FODL Membership Materials

The team discussed updates on the membership brochure and a newsletter.

- They decided to finalize edits to the brochure by April 1st. The group confirmed pricing changes, with individual and family memberships increasing by \$5 each, while friends group rates remained unchanged at \$25.
- The group also mentioned potentially offering bundled membership options with local Friends groups. They decided to park this idea for future consideration after their dues increase.

- A draft of an FODL ‘newsletter’ is in development. The Board members will have the opportunity to review prior to distribution.

A report was provided and discussion followed regarding the *EveryLibrary* Fund.

- It was explained that this fundraising opportunity can accommodate various funding amounts and involves a 10% fee.
- The team discussed setting up a donation system, it was recommended that the default be a *recurring* donation of \$10 per month rather than a one-time donation.
- It was explained that donors receive an immediate automated thank-you email, and organizations should follow up with a personalized thank-you email within a month.
- The team learned they can use templates provided by the donation platform for initial campaign letters, and the platform charges a 10% fee that covers credit card processing and administrative costs.
- Initial fundraising goal will be \$500.
- It was agreed to email the platform representative to get started, and to work on the initial letter using their template.

Georgetown Library Event Planning Meeting

The team discussed plans for an upcoming meeting on the 27th, which will feature a speaker followed by a working lunch. It was proposed that as a basis of the table discussions we adapt the questions previously developed for the annual meeting exit survey. The table participants will choose a facilitator and discuss collaboration topics, with each table reporting back their best idea. The group decided to use sketch pads and sticky notes for recording table discussions, with existing green sticky notes from FODL supplies be used. They also discussed promoting the event through the listserv and Facebook.

The group addressed meeting expense considerations, noting that while in-kind donations like water and food would be accepted, that the full cost of items should be reflected in their budget planning.

Statewide Friends Branding Strategy Discussion

It was suggested that we create identifying materials to represent FODL during advocacy efforts, noting that many legislators are unfamiliar with the state-level “Friends” group. The group discussed creating name tags and promotional materials to better distinguish the statewide FODL organization from local Friends groups. The team mentioned using existing materials - purple buttons and business cards. It was suggested the name tag design from the previously

held “Library Summit” could be adapted for future advocacy events. The team agreed this would be helpful for both legislative meetings and county meetings.

It was suggested that the organization would benefit from having an “elevator pitch” to clearly communicate the organization's unique identity and purpose.

Upcoming meetings

The group discussed upcoming meeting schedules and whether there was a better time slot in which to hold monthly meetings. For the time being the basic schedule will not be changed. It was decided to hold a Zoom meeting on April 13th. Upcoming monthly Board meetings will be finalized later.

The county meetings in April, June, and September will be in person. It was proposed that we consider organizing a board retreat in October to address items on the "parking lot" and discuss strategic planning, including library funding challenges.

The team acknowledged the complexity of the current State of Delaware library funding formula and agreed to advocate for changes rather than simply requesting specific funding amounts. It was noted that Representative Phillips and Senator Sturgeon are also examining the code.

Action items included working on an elevator pitch statement, moving forward with *EveryLibrary* , and team members reviewing the newsletter draft when shared.